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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001567

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/26/15

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#) [UG](#)

SUBJECT: LRA UPDATE: MONUC MISSION ARRIVES IN ABA, FARDC
DEPLOYMENT DELAYED

REF: A. KINSHASA 1559

- [1](#)B. KAMPALA 2067
- [1](#)C. KINSHASA 1532
- [1](#)D. KINSHASA 1519

Classified By: PolCouns MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) Three MONUC aircraft arrived in Aba late afternoon September 25 with Sixth Military Regional Commander General Padiri, several MONUC DDRRR experts and UNHCR officials. They were met by LRA Colonel Otti and taken to the LRA camp. Initial discussions were not promising, however. The LRA has rejected unconditional disarmament. Otti told Padiri that he could not make any commitments, that only Kony could. When Padiri called Kony in Sudan, Kony said that he would have to "talk to his Washington mediator" and get back to Padiri with a proposal for conditional disarmament.

[1](#)2. (C) MONUC Force Commander Gaye said that talks with Ugandan military leaders in Kampala September 23 were positive in nature, and that the Ugandan military assured him that at this time there is no intent to undertake a military action into DRC territory. Although Gaye was accompanied by FARDC officers, whose presence was welcomed by the Ugandans, the Ugandans reiterated their desire to meet with Congolese Army Chief of Staff Kisempia as soon as possible. (Comment: It is not clear whether Kisempia will go to Kampala today, in advance of the proposed Museveni visit to Kinshasa. End Comment.)

[1](#)3. (C) The planned FARDC deployment September 25 from Kinshasa of a so-called commando element did not take place due to lack of fuel for the aircraft. Air Force Commander John Numbi told PolCouns September 25 that he had notified Kisempia of the problem and asked Kisempia to contact MONUC. (Comment: MONUC was unaware of the fuel problem when PolCouns spoke to them in the evening of September 25, but they are prepared to assist the Congolese if asked September

[1](#)26. This is the kind of logistical problem that typifies FARDC operations and limits their effectiveness. End Comment.) Numbi claimed that as the movement was to take place on Sunday he could not force a private company to provide the fuel, although he assured PolCouns that the deployment would take place early on September 26 with assistance from private companies. These commando troops are destined to reinforce the First Integrated Brigade elements already dispatched by General Padiri to Aba. (Comment: Numbi identified the "commando" troops as those who had been stationed at Beni and subsequently transferred to the Kamina training base. If so, this would mean they are non-integrated MLC troops from Vice President Bemba, a troublesome lot that were shipped to Kamina to stop their excessive predation on civilians in Beni. End Comment.)

[1](#)4. (C) Presidential Private Secretary Kikaya bin Karubi told PolCouns that President Kabila appreciated the points made by A/S Frazer in their telecon September 24, and said that the presidency is very aware of the sensitivity of the issue and its potential destabilizing effect on the region and the Congolese electoral process. The Congolese are not comfortable with the proposed visit to Kinshasa by President Museveni at this time, but have not yet rejected the idea out of hand.

[1](#)5. (C) Comment: The area in Orientale province in which the LRA is present is very remote, north of Ituri District in Haut-Vele district. It is therefore outside the normal operating area of the FARDC First Integrated Brigade, or indeed any area of traditional FARDC operations. MONUC did deploy some fuel bladders to Aru (Ituri district -- almost 150 kms from Aba) the nearest point with some MONUC and FARDC support structures. The fuel bladders addressed problems posed by fuel shortages in the general area, and permitted the MONUC/GDRC/UNHCR September 25 visit to take place. We assume the air transport for the commandos would also need to go to Aru as it is the only reasonably serviceable airstrip in the area, with further deployment to Aba required from there. The FARDC troops may make it out of Kinshasa today but given the above difficulties probably will not reach Aba until at least tomorrow.

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